rec'd georgetown 11/30/77

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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Prime Minister Forbes Burnham
Government Building
Brickdam Georgetown
Guyana, South America

Dear Honorable Forbes Burnham:

The Reverend Jim Jones and the Peoples Temple have recently come under what appears to be undue fire from certain quarters.

I have visited Reverend Jones' church and was struck by the spirit of the services, the compassion and goodwill displayed, the apparent good work, the use of Afro-American culture as I have never seen it before. Outside the church in the community at large, I have seen young black men and women members of the church, once crippled by feelings of inferiority, now walk with pride and dignity and a positive bearing with a clear sense of purpose.

Reverend Jones' baptism by the fire of reactionary wrath was of course predictable. Long before Socrates and Jesus Christ to Martin Luther King and John F. Kennedy, men and women have been persecuted and gone to their deaths whenever they show promise of organizing people and society--successfully--for human good. Today, as we now know from COINTELPRO and the confessions of the FBI, the CIA and the Watergate burglars, persecution incorporates official and scientific prosecution whose method is infiltration.

Members of the black bourgeoisie complain that his membership is predominantly black and in the black community where he should have no place. Nor would he, if the black ministers were not failing their roles. The thing that most came home to me on my visit to the church was a sense of the failure of black church leadership. Reverend Jones has provided them a model of their mission in life, God's mandate to them, their call to preach. In terms of cries

that the temple operates with the heavy hand of discipline and financial demands on members, I can testify that I have witnessed in churches throughout the country, including an Anniversary celebration of the president of a major black denomination where he stood and milked contributions by the hundreds of dollars each from elderly women pensioners and widows. And there is far more than I could say out of my experience and observations since early childhood, variously as member, organist and minister of music, the latter for the oldest black church in the United States in Petersburg, Virginia.

The Reverend Ike openly demands high pay from his followers and flaunts it. Why is there not an investigation and witchhunt of Reverend Ike?

When people speak of politics in church, I am reminded of Hemingway's remark in, I believe, A Farewell to Arms, that there is politics in all religion and religion in all politics.

When I interviewed Reverend Jones for my hour-long radio program, I noted the public response was overwhelming and positive. Why are those who resist freedom for Afro-Americans so bent on nailing Jim Jones to the cross?

Sincerely,

Julia Hare

JULIA HARE

bcc: Michael Prokes
Marsha Jones